

Senate Bill 565: the Free Capitol Square Parking Bill

Dear Members of the Ethics Reform and Government Operation Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

As you are aware, Senate Bill 565 will make parking on the Capitol Square available to the public after work hours. This will be a great benefit to the businesses located downtown and encourage people to come here on nights and weekends.

These ⁸⁸115 parking spots will continue to be available to the Legislature during the few occasions a year when they are needed after hours and will be marked accordingly.

Specifically, SB 565 will reserve parking spots around the Capitol Square from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and any other times that are designated by DOA. Parking spots will be open and available for parking by the public, except as restricted for special purposes or emergency situations.

Please join me in supporting Senate Bill 565 for the betterment of downtown businesses and the public.

Thank you,

Glenn Grothman
State Senator

CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Testimony on Senate Bill 565
March 17, 2010

Mr. Chair and Members,

Thank you for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 565. My name is Adam Plotkin, President of Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc. We are a neighborhood organization representing residents of the Isthmus in Madison, covering an area from Blair to Regent Street. We are proud to count the Chairman as one of our members.

Capitol Neighborhoods Executive Council has voted unanimous support of Senate Bill 565. As with any downtown in Wisconsin, the residents recognize and embrace the proximity to businesses in our neighborhoods. Downtown Madison has a unique business and residential climate that residents are eager to support and maintain.

However, improvements are needed to sustain and grow this climate. One of the most common complaints, whether real or perceived, comes from people who live outside of the Downtown area who find that parking is a deterrent to visiting. While SB 565 will not eliminate that perception completely, it will assist in drawing those visitors to the Capitol Square and State Street after hours and on the weekends.

Over the last several years there has been a revitalization of the Capitol Square with the addition of several restaurants and new retail outlets. The State also recently completed upgrades to the inner square with new lighting, fencing, seating, and sidewalks. The City of Madison, in its most recent budget, included funding to make similar upgrades to the outer side of the square. SB 565 will complement this investment and help increase access to downtown Madison.

Thank you again for this hearing. I look forward to the Committee's support of Senate Bill 565.